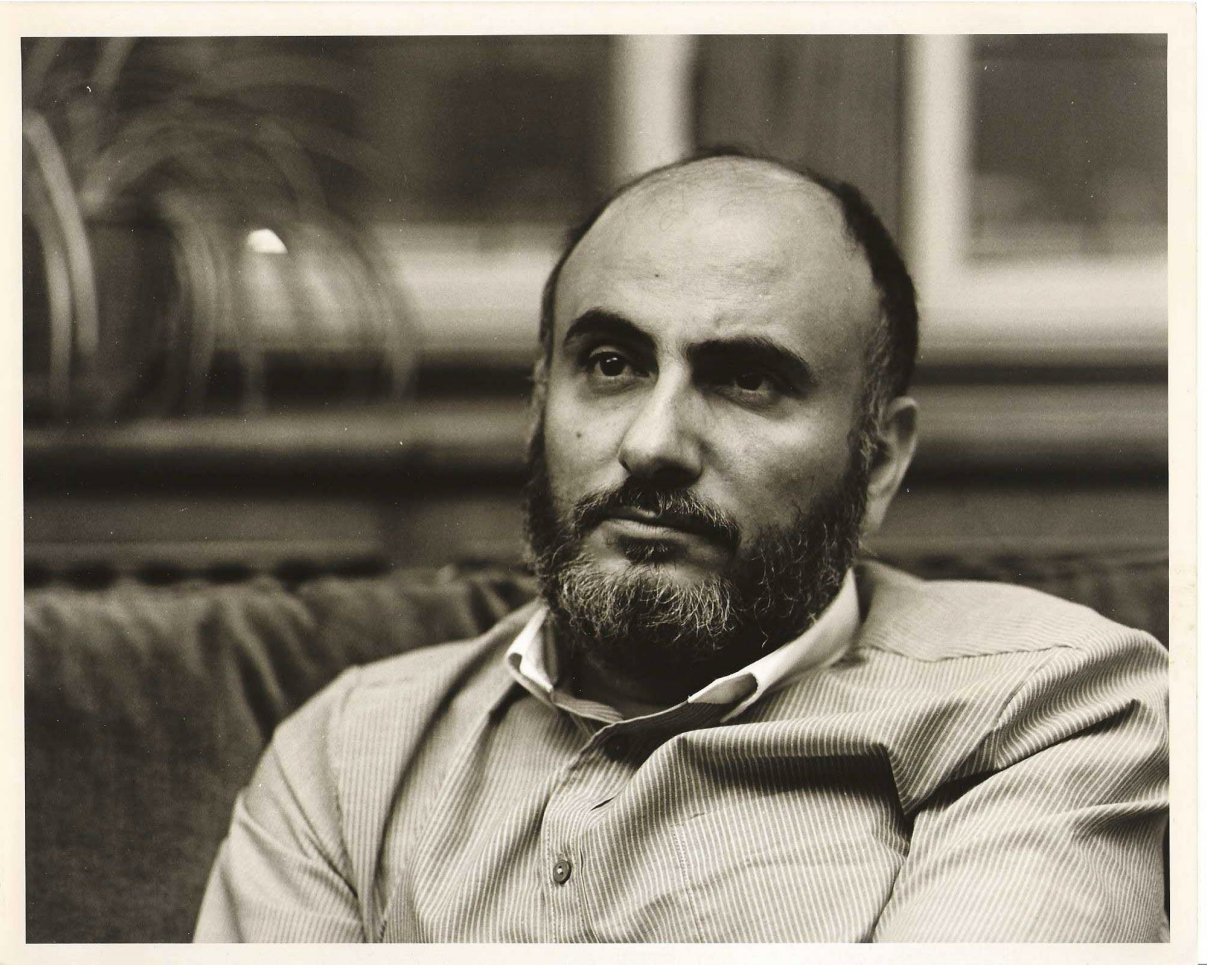

Victor Teboul 4193 Hampton
N.D.G.
Montréal, Québec
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Montreal , October 16th, 1985 .

Mrs. Fran Guttman
Canadian Jewish Congress 1590 avenue du Dr. Penfield
Montreal, Quebec
H3G IC5

Dear Fran,

Please find enclosed my presentation at Congress 's Consultation ineeting held in August. I apologize for the delay.

Could you please let me know where and at what approximate date it will be published?

Yours truly ,

Victor

Victor

Anti-Semitism in Quebec

Summary of a presentation I made at a consultation meeting of the Canadian Jewish Congress in August 1985. I was then the Editor of *Jonathan* and the Quebec Director of the Jewish lobby group, the Canada-Israel Committee, as it was then called.

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In a capsule, I think we all agree to say that anti-Semitism has never taken violent forms in this province compared to what has taken place in Europe or even in Arab countries.

However, despite that fact, anti-Semitic attitudes did exist in Quebec and do still manifest themselves. Generally speaking, these attitudes were, until the sixties, an integral part of the anti-American, anti-English and anti-capitalist sentiments, more vocal among the Conservative right-wing oriented nationalists. They were expressed matter of factly in the writings of respected and even admired historians of contemporary Quebec such as Robert Rumilly and Lionel Groulx.

Jews appeared in their writings as the malevolent agents of Capitalism and Communism. The two were obviously related because they both represented the evil of materialism which led inevitably to anti-clericalism and atheism.

These attitudes should not surprise anyone today, since until the late fifties and maybe in the sixties, schoolchildren in the French Catholic schools had to learn by heart a series of questions and answers on the death and crucifixion of Jesus Christ. One of them held the leaders of the Jewish people of the time directly responsible.

What surprised me when I was working on my first book was that the attitudes expressed by these noted French-Canadian historians and opinion-leaders were not questioned by those who commented on their works in essays on Quebec. The matter was just not raised, and if it was, it was abruptly

denied.

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In short, I would say that anti-Semitism was a consequence of Québec's late arrival into the modern industrial era and is directly related to it's elite's incapacity to relate to industrialization until the late 1940s' .

In fact, interestingly enough, historians and writers who had an open mind to capitalism and industrialization also happened, quite often, to have a high regard for the Jewish community and its contribution to the material wealth of this province.

There was Benjamin Sulte in the last century, Oliver Asselin in this one and Jean-Charles Harvey who, during the Second World War was one of the only journalists to combat fascism and anti-Semitism and actively encourage the war effort in his newspaper Le Jour. (You understand why I devoted my last book to this newspaper) .

In the 1960s' and 1970s' , the French-Canadian intelligentsia was reading books about the traumatizing effects of being a dominated and colonized people. The frame of reference was the liberation movements in the African Continent. One of the French authors who wrote extensively on the subject was Tunisian-born Albert Memmi. Who was drawing on his own Jewish experience to denounce that condition. His Portrait d'un Colonisé was the Bible of nationalists .

But somehow they did not know he was Jewish and a Zionist and that, in other books, he was analyzing his own Jewish experience and the necessity of Zionism as a liberating factor in the Jewish psyche.

Until recently, we were viewed in Quebec as an anglophone homogeneous group. Sorne real efforts have been made in the last few years to comprehend the complexity of our cornmunity and serious books and articles have been written about us.

In the political jargon, we have become a "cultural.community" within Mr. Godin's Immigration and Cultural Communities Department. This depart-

mental policy excludes us from the Cultural Affairs Department which subsidizes the non-ethnic artistic and cultural groups.

Our magazine Jonathan, for instance, is directed to that Department for these purposes

because it is a Jewish magazine, despite the fact it is published in French and aimed at the general public.

I thank that policy should be questioned: when does one cease to be considered a member of a cultural community to become simply a citizen or this province? One must quickly add here that•the Liberal Party of Quebec has not tackled seriously that question.

With the decline of nationalism, language is not as much of a barrier as it used to be. People whom we could consider to be at the left of the political spectrum speak to you in English if you cannot speak French and they do not feel antagonized in doing so.

And that new reality offers many possibilities to all of us, which brings me to a few suggestions as to how to affect attitudes:

1. One general recommendation would be to open up to the world! Bring to Montreal speakers who have excelled in their particular field:

_Jewish and non-Jewish and not only for Bond Dinners but for Monsieur Tout le Monde.

2. Invite Quebec opinion leaders and (not only political ones) to such panels as this one and let them exchange with the audience.

3. Diversify the topics of discussion, so that they do not always limit themselves to strictly Jewish matters. Recently, many issues have proven to be of concern not only to Jews but to other minorities. as well as to other progressive groups in Quebec.

We should be looking more actively for converging actions as far as human rights are concerned.

4. Develop ties with individuals and groups that go beyond your Jewish preoccupations. I am not saying that you abandon those preoccupations but find another angle.

5. Reactivate the Jewish-Christian dialogue. I am saying this while bearing in mind the admirable work of Action Rapprochement of AJCS and that of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews.

We should take into account that Christian groups have become very politicized and are involved in the just and humane cause of assisting developing countries. At times, however, they also promote their ideologies quite innocently.

VICTOR TEBOUL

Victor Teboul is the Quebec Director of the Canada-Israel Committee and founder and editor of its French-language publication Jonathan. His most recent book is about the emergence of liberalism in modern Quebec. (Le Jour, Emergence d Liberalisme moderne au Québec, mtl, Hurtubise, 1984).